

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DESCRIPTION

The Chesterfield County Department of Public Affairs is an extension of the County Administrator's Office and is charged with functioning across all organizational lines. Coordination of the many different functions inherent in media relations, community and constituent information, and internal information provides a synergistic effect and enables the county to achieve its goals more effectively. The many different functions must focus complementary

messages on the same issue at the right time in the most effective mix, across a variety of communication channels, to well-targeted audiences. Effective organization, effective planning, and a focus on clear messages and themes that will further county objectives are at the heart of the task. Results of the 1996 bond referendum clearly demonstrate the value of strategic communications by professional public affairs staff provided with adequate tools.

FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

	FY2002 Actual	FY2003 Adopted	FY2004 Biennial Planned	FY2004 Adopted	Change FY2003 to FY2004	FY2005 Projected	FY2006 Projected	FY2007 Projected
Personnel	\$386,928	\$389,900	\$389,900	\$439,200	12.6%	\$439,200	\$439,200	\$439,200
Operating	63,823	96,400	96,400	98,000	1.7%	101,000	104,000	104,000
Capital	<u>7,819</u>	<u>12,000</u>	<u>12,000</u>	<u>12,000</u>	0.0%	<u>9,000</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>6,000</u>
Total	\$458,570	\$498,300	\$498,300	\$549,200	10.2%	\$549,200	\$549,200	\$549,200
Revenue	<u>64,950</u>	<u>64,400</u>	<u>64,400</u>	<u>84,400</u>	31.1%	<u>84,400</u>	<u>84,400</u>	<u>84,400</u>
Net Cost	\$393,620	\$433,900	\$433,900	\$464,800	7.1%	\$464,800	\$464,800	\$464,800
FT Pos.	6	6	6	7	1	7	7	7

Note: During FY2003, one position was transferred from the "Unassigned" responsibility center to Public Affairs to convert the Spanish Interpreter position from part-time to full-time.

BUDGET ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The Public Affairs Department has developed a communication program centered around key target audiences, which include employees, citizens, business, and government. This program focuses on basic communication themes tied to the county's vision and strategic agenda. The department has responsibility for managing products and programs that communicate successfully with target groups across multiple communication channels. Through the use of newsletters, newspaper articles, and other public announcements, the department builds pride, enthusiasm, and morale through increasing employee awareness of Chesterfield's heritage, work force, innovations and creativity, and the variety of efforts that define value-added government service.

Public Affairs consistently markets Chesterfield's attractiveness as a first choice community, and reinforces the county's positive local and regional profile.

The department has established a reputation for high levels of customer service and satisfaction, and plans to build on this foundation. The area of citizen information in an on-line environment is a new challenge that will solidify the county's leadership position among local governments and provide a service that customers increasingly expect. A top-notch Internet presence is also a key element in attracting new business investments to the county. Public Affairs reviews all county website content

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

and coordinates with the Information Systems Technology Department on the presentation of information. The department earned 16 national awards in 2002, leading the nation among localities with populations of 500,000 or less, and intends to maintain this leadership role.

In FY2003, Public Affairs initiated a project that will provide a means for citizens to subscribe to receive certain county notifications via e-mail. This project was included as part of the 2003-2008 Technology Improvement Program's e-Government initiatives.

Personnel costs comprise approximately 80% of the total departmental budget. After assessing the scope of products and services provided by Public Affairs, the county realizes significant gains via this departmental effort. There is a solid return on the investment. Public Affairs will continue to look for opportunities to employ outside resources wherever it is most productive and cost efficient. To maintain the current level of quality in its service delivery

while addressing ever increasing demands for service, the department requested and received an additional part-time graphic artist position during FY2003.

Staff has also recognized the necessity of change as it pertains to the county's changing populations. In an effort to better address the needs of the county's growing Hispanic population, a part-time Spanish Interpreter position was converted to full-time during FY2003. The Utilities department contributed \$15,000 toward funding this position since the interpreter provides services to the utilities department. For FY2004, the department's budget reflects the funding for this position. The contribution from Utilities for FY2004 will be \$20,000.

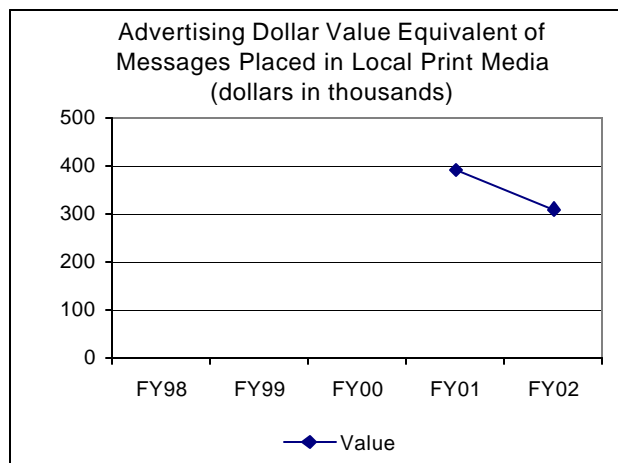
Of its FY2004 allocation, the department plans to use \$12,000 for the purchase of desktop video editing equipment. This will allow the department to enhance the products and services it currently offers.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Goal: To reinforce the positive image of Chesterfield County. Supports countywide strategic goal number 3

Objective: To place county government information in all Chesterfield homes at a minimal cost

Measure: Advertising dollar value equivalent of messages placed in local print media at no charge



Initiatives

- Chesterfield Choice in the Community Weekly
- Community Connections
- News releases to local media outlets

Note: 1. Calendar year 2000 was the first year the Public Affairs Department tracked data on the advertising dollar value equivalent of messages placed in local print media. Data is now tracked on a fiscal year basis.

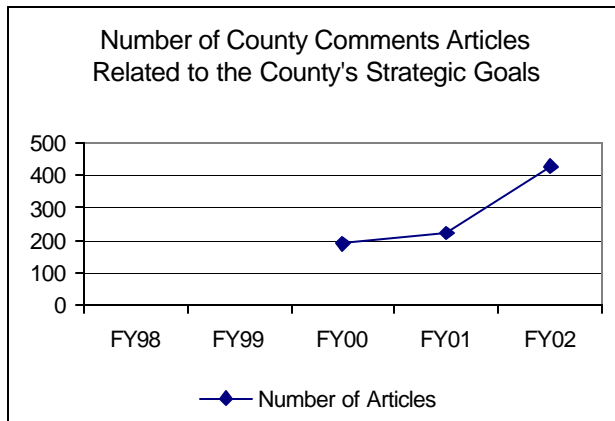
2. The publication reduced the amount of space provided to Public Affairs from 2001-2002, accounting for reduced dollar value.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Goal: To keep county employees informed about relevant issues. Supports all countywide strategic goals

Objective: To foster employee awareness of the county's programs and services

Measure: Number of County Comments articles related to the county's strategic goals



Initiatives

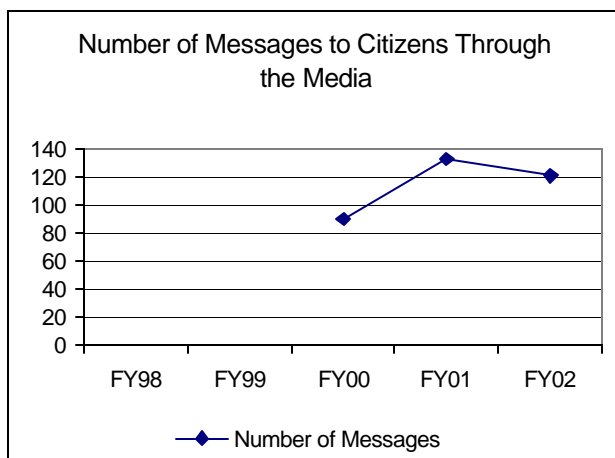
- Employee newsletter (County Comments)
- Special events

Note: No target has been established for this measure.

Goal: To educate citizens about the scope of services offered by Chesterfield County as a provider of world class customer service. Supports countywide strategic goal number 2

Objective: Enhance citizen awareness of the county's efforts to provide world-class customer service

Measure: Number of messages to citizens through media



Initiatives

- Chesterfield Choice in the Community Weekly
- County Comments
- News releases
- Comcast programs

Note: No target has been established for this measure.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

The department will continue its focus on sending the message to customers about the progress of Chesterfield County toward its strategic goals and its mission of being a first choice community.

To maintain the required level of services expected by the county's customers despite increases in volume and the increasing complexity of demands, the department is streamlining internal processes and utilizing several total quality improvement techniques.

If the department is expected to surpass its current level of service, personnel increases will need to be further addressed in the near future. From 2001-2002, the demand for brochures and other print items tripled, with no increase in the number of graphic designers. The additional half position granted during FY2003 will help alleviate some of the workload stress, but will prove insufficient in future years if demands for service continue to increase at the current pace.